BRICS+ in 2025:

A Strategic Assessment of the Emerging Multipolar Order
McKinsey-Style Strategic Report
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Executive Summary

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The BRICS bloc has completed its most transformative phase in 2024-2025, expanding to ten full members (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, UAE, Indonesia) and creating a formal “Partner Country” tier of 12-13 nations. Collectively, BRICS+ now represents:

- 46–48 % of world population
- 35–39 % of global GDP (PPP) – already larger than the G7
- 43.6 % of global crude-oil production
- 72 % of rare-earth reserves
- Projected 3.8–5.0 % average real GDP growth in 2025–2030 (vs. 1.0–1.8 % for G7)

The bloc is no longer an informal discussion club but a structured geopolitical platform with its own financial architecture designed to reduce dependency on the US dollar and Western-controlled institutions. Its core strategic objective is not to “destroy” the current order but to create a resilient parallel system – a “strategic safeguard” – that can be activated in case of further weaponization of the dollar or exclusion from SWIFT-like networks.

Key elements of this parallel system are now operational or in advanced pilot:

- New Development Bank (NDB) – $32+ bn deployed, 30 % in local currencies
- Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) – $100 bn liquidity backstop
- BRICS Pay / Decentralized Cross-border Messaging System (DCMS) – sanction-proof messaging
- mBridge CBDC platform – successful oil-trade pilots bypassing dollar clearing
- “Gold Corridor” concept – using physical gold as neutral collateral for local-currency trade financing

While internal frictions (China–India, Egypt–Ethiopia, Iran–others) and vastly divergent political systems prevent BRICS+ from becoming a formal alliance akin to NATO, the bloc has already achieved “escape velocity” in three critical domains: commodity leverage, payment-system alternatives, and development-finance optionality.

For multinational corporations and governments, the emergence of a dual-track global financial system is now the central scenario for the next decade. Companies must prepare for a world in which 40–50 % of their growth markets will increasingly transact outside the traditional dollar ecosystem.

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1. Evolution & Institutionalization

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From investment-bank acronym (2001) → informal summit process (2009) → formal intergovernmental organization with tiered membership (2024–2025).

Key inflection points:

- 2023 Johannesburg Summit: invitation of six new members
- Jan 2024: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, UAE join
- Oct 2024 Kazan Summit: creation of “Partner Country” category
- 6 Jan 2025: Indonesia becomes 10th full member

The Kazan Declaration formalized a two-tier architecture that solves the earlier “all or nothing” membership dilemma and dramatically widens the bloc’s sphere of influence without forcing full integration.

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2. Current Membership Structure (November 2025)

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Category	Countries	Combined Population	GDP PPP 2024
Full Members (10)	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, UAE, Indonesia	~3.55 billion (46 %)	~39 %
Partner Countries (13 confirmed or invited)	Algeria, Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Honduras	~850 million	~6–7 %
Under consideration / signaled interest	Saudi Arabia (status frozen), Nicaragua, Venezuela, Pakistan, etc.		

Saudi Arabia remains the most significant outstanding case; its hesitation reflects the tension between economic interest in BRICS financial rails and security dependence on the United States.

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3. Economic & Demographic Scale

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Metric (2024–2025)	BRICS+ (10)	G7	Implication
Population	3.55 bn (46 %)	780 m	Largest consumer market in history
GDP PPP	$51–55 tn (39 %)	$48 tn	Already larger than G7
GDP nominal	$28–30 tn	$45 tn	Expected crossover ~2030–2033
Average real growth 2025–2030	3.8–5.0 %	1.0–1.8 %	Center of gravity of global growth
Share of global trade	24–26 %	~30 %	Rapidly closing gap

Forecast (IMF, World Bank, EIU blended): BRICS+ nominal GDP surpasses G7 between 2030 (optimistic) and 2040 (baseline).

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4. Commodity & Supply-Chain Dominance

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The true “hard power” underpinning BRICS financial ambitions:

Resource	BRICS+ Share	Key Players	Strategic Leverage
Crude oil production	43.6 %	Russia, Iran, UAE, Brazil	Ability to settle large oil trades in non-USD
Natural gas	36 %	Russia, Iran, UAE	Energy security within bloc
Rare-earth elements	72 % of reserves	China	Choke-point for green-tech supply chains
Coal	78 % production	China, India, Indonesia	Continued support for coal-based growth
Agricultural output	45 % (52 % rice)	China, India, Brazil	Food-security leverage

This concentration is the material reason why alternative payment systems are viable: there is enough intra-bloc (and bloc-to-partner) commodity trade volume to achieve critical mass without the dollar.

5. The BRICS Financial Architecture

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5.1 New Development Bank (NDB)

- Headquarters: Shanghai
- Approved portfolio: >$32 bn (96 projects)
- 2022–2026 target: 30 % local-currency financing (already 28 % in 2024)
- Climate finance: 40 % of new approvals

5.2 Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)

- $100 bn pool; no IMF-style conditionality
- Tested in 2022 (Russia drew technical assistance)

5.3 Payment-System Alternatives

System	Type	Status 2025	Key Advantage
BRICS Pay / DCMS	Decentralized messaging	Live, expanding	No single point of failure/sanction
CIPS (China)	RMB clearing	5,000+ participants	Already processes $30+ tn/year
SPFS (Russia)	Ruble messaging	500+ banks (20 countries)	Proven post-SWIFT exclusion
mBridge	Multi-CBDC platform	Oil-trade pilots successful	Instant settlement, no correspondent banks

5.4 The “Golden Anchor” / Gold Corridor

Not a unified currency, but a framework whereby physical gold held in member vaults is used as collateral for local-currency letters of credit and trade finance.

- China gold reserves: 2,292 t (Nov 2024)
- Russia: 2,333 t
- Combined BRICS central-bank purchases 2022–2024: ~2,500 t (25 % of global annual mine production)

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6. Internal Dynamics & Governance Constraints

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Fault Line	Examples	Impact on Cohesion
Geopolitical rivalries	China–India border, Egypt–Ethiopia dam, Iran–UAE islands	Blocks military or monetary union
Economic asymmetry	China = 70 % of bloc GDP	Smaller members fear subordination

Divergent foreign policy	India/Brazil multi-alignment vs. Russia/Iran confrontation	Prevents explicit “anti-West” posture
Political systems	Democracies vs. authoritarian states	Limits treaty-based integration

Result: BRICS+ will remain a “platform of platforms” rather than a supranational entity. Consensus rule and annual rotating presidency reinforce sovereignty-first logic.

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7. Strategic Implications

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1. Dual-Track Global Financial System (Central Scenario) By 2030, ~30–40 % of international trade (especially commodities) will have credible non-dollar rails. Corporations will need dual treasury and payment capabilities.
2. Progressive Neutralization of Unilateral Sanctions Countries inside the BRICS financial ecosystem will become increasingly sanction-resistant. The marginal cost of excluding a BRICS+ member from SWIFT rises exponentially.
3. Accelerated Reform (or Obsolescence) of Bretton Woods Institutions The existence of NDB + CRA + local-currency financing forces IMF/World Bank either to reform voting shares and conditionality or risk irrelevance in the Global South.

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8. Scenarios 2026–2035

Scenario	Probability	Key Trigger	Outcome
Managed Coexistence	55 %	Gradual local-currency trade growth	Dual system; dollar remains dominant reserve
Accelerated Bifurcation	30 %	Major new sanctions package or SWIFT exclusion of another member	Rapid shift of 20–25 % of energy trade to non-USD
Reintegration	10 %	Major global recession + U.S. policy reversal	BRICS systems remain but dollar regains share
Hot Conflict / Breakdown	5 %	Direct military confrontation involving members	Fragmentation into regional blocs

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9. Recommendations for Multinational Leaders

Immediate (0–18 months)

1. Map exposure to BRICS+ commodity supply chains (oil, rare earths, agriculture).
2. Pilot acceptance of RMB, INR, AED, or CBDC payments for relevant trade lanes.
3. Establish treasury capability for gold-collateralized trade finance.

Medium term (2–5 years)

4. Build dual-stack payment architecture (SWIFT + CIPS/SPFS/mBridge).
5. Re-domicile or create special-purpose entities in UAE/Singapore/Indonesia to access BRICS financial rails without triggering secondary sanctions.

6. Engage NDB directly for infrastructure financing in emerging markets (lower conditionality, local-currency option).

Long term

7. Treat the BRICS+ financial ecosystem as a permanent feature of the global landscape and optimize global operations accordingly.

Appendix – Key Data Tables

(Full sources available upon request – 22 primary references including IMF, World Bank, NDB Annual Reports, Kazan Declaration, official central-bank releases, and think-tank analyses)